

# OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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**SERMON TITLE** God of the Breakthrough

**SERIES**

**DATE** 10/23/2022

**KEY SCRIPTURE** 1 Chronicles 14:8-17

**SYNOPSIS** Even in overwhelming troubles God can bring breakthrough.

**HIGHLIGHTS**



## ☞ God of the Breakthrough

Last week: Paul and Silas were in prison but still chose to praise the Lord who broke the chains of their bondage and used them to advance the Kingdom of God. God wants to free us from the various bondages we each face so that we can fulfill his call on our lives.

### ☞ 1 Chronicles 14:8-17

8 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, they went up in full force to search for him, but David heard about it and went out to meet them. 9 Now the Philistines had come and raided the Valley of Rephaim; 10 so David inquired of God: "Shall I go and attack the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?" The Lord answered him, "Go, I will hand them over to you." 11 So David and his men went up to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He said, "As waters break out, God has broken out against my enemies by my hand." So that place was called Baal Perazim. 12 The Philistines had abandoned their gods there, and David gave orders to burn them in the fire. 13 Once more the Philistines raided the valley; 14 so David inquired of God again, and God answered him, "Do not go straight up, but circle around them and attack them in front of the balsam trees. 15 As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move out to battle, because that will mean God has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army." 16 So David did as God commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army, all the way from Gibeon to Gezer. 17 So David's fame spread throughout every land, and the Lord made all the nations fear him.

**Philistines** = from a root meaning "to roll in ashes or dust" as an act of mourning. Historically, they were hostile enemies that repeatedly challenged the Israelis. We have a spiritual enemy who would love for us to be in mourning or constantly down and depressed. He keeps on hounding us, hoping we will give up.

The attack in verse 8 is right after David was anointed king over all Israel. In fact, it was shortly before this that David took the city of Jerusalem and made it his home (cf. 2 Samuel 5). So, we see that God was with David, giving him success when the enemy attacked. Just like last ☞ week, remember, **the enemy often attacks right after a spiritual victory**. In this case they came in full force. When you are advancing with God, the enemy will come strongly against you to intimidate and subdue you. Here, it says that David went out to meet them, but in 2 Samuel 5, it says that first David went down to the stronghold and inquired of God.

The stronghold represents waiting on the Lord. Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)... those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

I think the stronghold could also represent the armor of God. Ephesians 6:11-18 describes the armor. It's all about standing your ground against spiritual forces of evil. Truth, righteousness, readiness, faith, salvation, and the word of God; these are the pieces of armor we need in order to take a stand. When the enemy attacks, run to the stronghold, suit up and wait on God.



The Philistines raided the Valley of Rephaim, which means the Valley of Giants, which was near Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 5 says they spread out, implying they were an overwhelming force coming against Israel. Here's the truth, **when troubles come, they often seem huge and overwhelming at the time.** We can be intimidated and fearful of the things the enemy brings against us. The things which are most intimidating are those which are close to home. Before he was king, David had actually been with the Philistines for a time and now they are coming after him at home. I think for us, these giants may represent old habits which we've dealt with, but they keep coming back to trouble us.

☞ Perhaps there have been some **old habits or elements of a sinful past** which you have left behind, but they **keep coming back to trouble you.** Perhaps an addiction crops up from time to time and you have to face it again. Perhaps an old sinful pattern which keeps trying to reassert itself in your life. Those types of challenges can be particularly gigantic and overwhelming. So, what will you do? Well, David inquired of the Lord. (v.10). In other words, pray! Notice in the armor of the Lord, the final ingredient is prayer. Pray in the spirit. Pray for each other. Always pray. James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

The Lord answered David with instructions, so he went up from there and defeated the Philistines at Baal Perazim, which means "the Lord who breaks out." Actually, the area wasn't named Baal Perazim until after this battle. The Lord demonstrated his power and David named ☞ the area after him. Church, **our God is Lord of the Breakthrough.** What kind of breakthrough do you need?

Last week we talked about chains of addiction and ungodly attitudes; chains of bitterness, backbiting, and spiritual blindness; chains of deception, division, distraction, doubt, depression, and discouragement; chains of failure, fear, and faulty thinking; chains of sinful habits, hate and haughtiness; chains of lethargy and lukewarmness. All of these and more need to be broken. Perhaps there's simply a troubling situation going on in your life and you need a breakthrough. **Our God is Lord of the Breakthrough.**

Then in verse 12 we see that the Philistines left their gods behind and David gave orders to burn them in the fire. He wasn't messing around. These "gods" represent the sinful nature and temptations we face. God can give us a spiritual breakthrough, but then there are still temptations and the sinful nature we all struggle against. These must also be dealt with. David chose to burn them. We often try to control them or filter them, but that is not effective.

Romans 8:7, 13

7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so... (*it can't be controlled*) 13 but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (*it has to die*)

Colossians 3:5-8

**Put to death**, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry... 8 But now you must **rid yourselves** of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language.



So, David has this great victory and even destroys the gods of the enemy. But then, the enemy ☞ strikes again! (v.13) **Our enemy is relentless, so we have to have resolve. When he is persistent, we must pray.**

David made no presumptions, but again went to the Lord in prayer. (v.14) He didn't just assume he could do the same thing again. He got a fresh word from the Lord before he responded to the enemy's attack. And, God gave him new plans. This time, instead of a head-on attack, he would circle around behind them and attack in front of the poplar trees. And, David was obedient. Part of his obedience was again to wait on the Lord. He had to wait for God's cue. Too often, we want forward momentum, but are unwilling to wait on God. We get restless, wanting action, but God says to wait for his cue.

Psalms 37:7

7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. (*wait*)

When things are going south in a hurry and it seems we're losing ground, we so badly want to ☞ take immediate action to remedy the situation. But, we need to **hear from the Lord and patiently wait for his direction.**

Now, in this case, there was an interesting directive from the Lord. "Listen for the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees." God would go first into the battle, but David had to listen for the sound in the trees. Most scholars agree this sound in the trees is symbolic of the moving of the Holy Spirit. He is compared to a wind which blows wherever it wants. (John 3:8). It was the sound of a mighty rushing wind when the 120 were baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4). And, the Spirit was described as wind and the breath of God which brought that valley of dry bones back to life. (Ezekiel 37). Church, **we need a move of the Holy Spirit! And, when the Spirit begins to move we must move out with him.** (v.15)

So, God goes first. He leads, we follow. In the desert with the Israelis it was a cloud by day and a fire by night. They had to watch and follow the Lord's leading. It's the same for us today – we ☞ need to **follow the Spirit's leading.** As we do, the Lord fights the battle in front of us.

That's what happened here. The Lord went out first to strike the Philistine army. Our God is a warrior who always wins. Isaiah 42:13 says, "The Lord will march out like a mighty man, like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies."

In 2 Chronicles 20, in Jehoshaphat's day, that's what happened. As the singers went out at the head of the army, praising the Lord, God set ambushes against the enemy. Interestingly, we see ☞ a pattern in the Scripture... when the enemy attacks, Godly people will **pray and praise and patiently wait for the Lord.** That's what David did here. That's what Jehoshaphat did in his time of need. That's what Paul and Silas did in the jail we talked about last time. And, even in Isaiah 42 where it describes God marching out to battle like a warrior, it is preceded with these words:



“Let them give glory to the Lord and proclaim his praise.” So, we pray and praise and patiently wait, but **when the Spirit of the Lord begins to move, we partner and proceed with him.**

When David partnered with God, he defeated the enemy, striking them down all the way from Gibeon to Gezer. In the Hebrew, that is “from the hills to the precipice.” And David’s fame spread throughout the land. All because he waited for God’s cue, the sound in the trees.

Here, in David’s case it says “then move out to battle.” The Hebrew word used for “move out” is also used of “giving birth.” This is interesting because when Jesus described the Spirit and wind in John 3, he was referring to being born again. And, in Acts 2, when the Spirit rushed into the room like a mighty wind, the church was born. You could even say that when the Spirit of the Lord moved like a breath in that valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37), they were born again as they came back to life.

It may seem as though the enemy has you surrounded. It may seem like there’s no escape and no hope. It may seem as though the dream has died, but when the Spirit of God moves there is new life; there is birth. It reminds me of the prophetic word we received at a conference just a few years ago; “Birth, birth, birth!”

God is moving and doing something new. There’s new life beginning to bud. There’re dry bones coming back together and living again. There’s victory over the enemy as the Spirit moves and raises up an army. In Isaiah 42, where it describes God as a warrior, just a few verses earlier it says, “9 See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”

☞ **God is up to something new.** He is going to battle against the enemy and he is leading us as we partner with him. He is the God of breakthrough and the God of new birth. Don’t let the enemy intimidate you. Don’t let old habits take root again in your life. Don’t let the enemy box you in and bind you up with division, distraction, doubt and discouragement. Instead, **pray and praise and patiently wait on the Lord.** Then, as the Spirit moves in your heart and life, **partner with him and push the enemy back.**